

SOME RECENT PHASES
OF GERMAN THEOLOGY

JOHN L. NUELSEN

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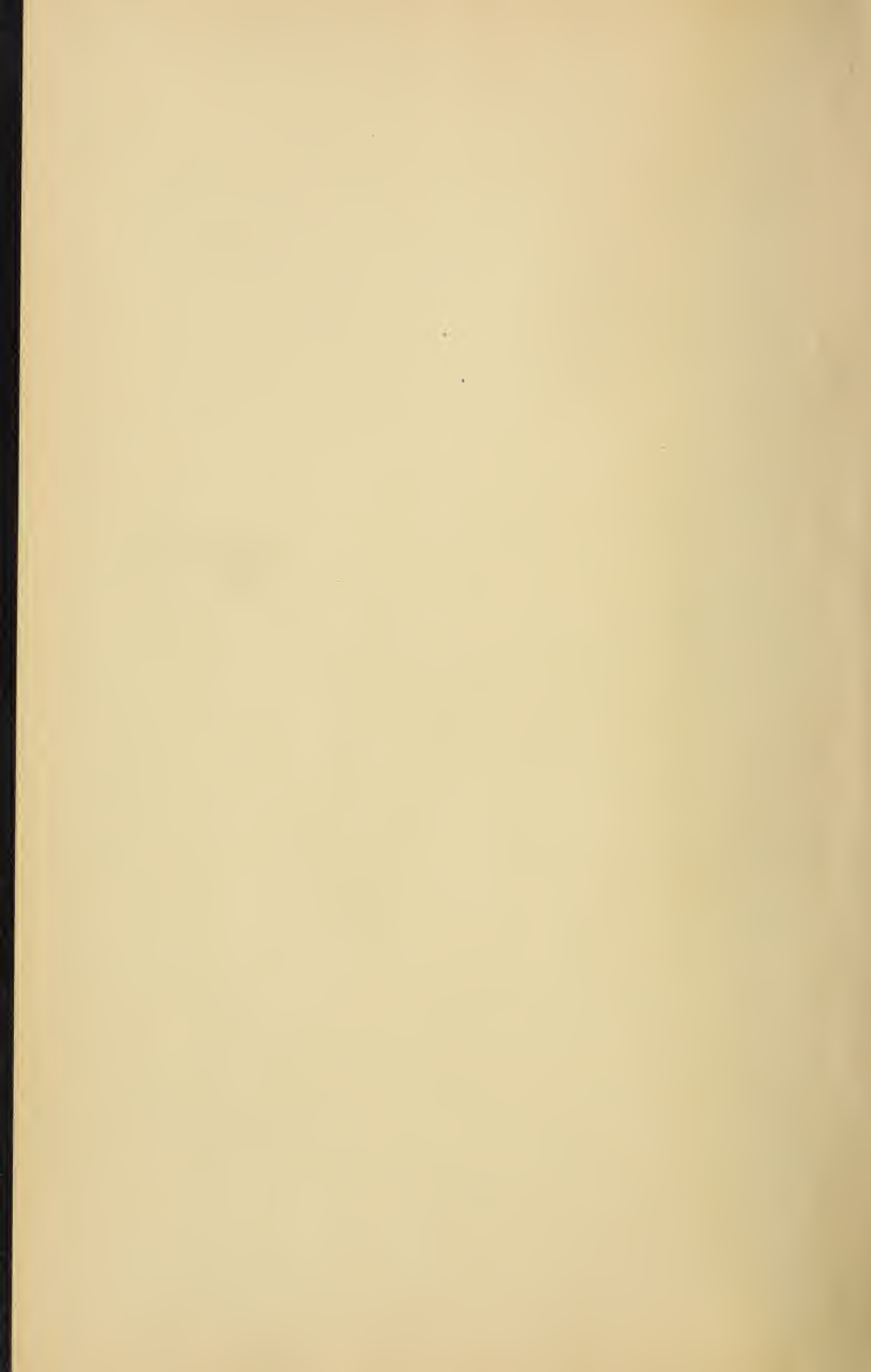


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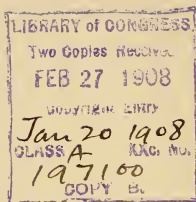
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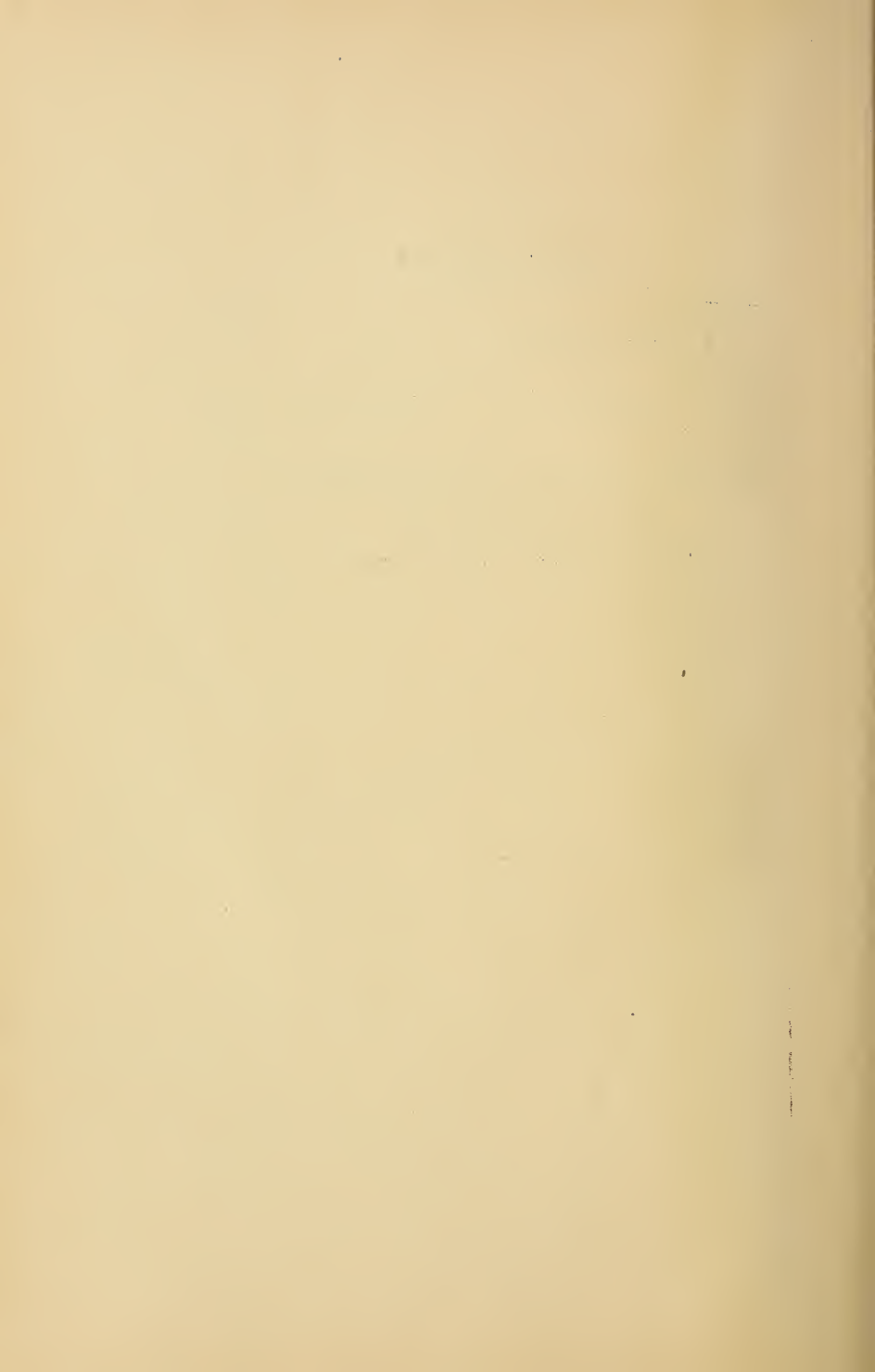


To
MRS. FANNY NAST GAMBLE,
The Generous Friend
of
The Nast Theological Seminary,
and of
The Lakeside Bible Institute.



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FOREWORD

THE following three lectures were delivered at the Bible Institute, at Lakeside, O., in August, 1907, and have called forth many expressions of desire to obtain them in printed form. They appear substantially as they were delivered. The author does not pretend to discuss the whole field of German Theology, but merely desires to point out some salient tendencies of the present day. It is hoped that the appended notes may prove helpful in acquainting American readers with at least part of the most recent German theological literature.



**SOME RECENT PHASES OF
GERMAN THEOLOGY.**

I

BIBLICAL STUDIES.

IN calling your attention to some of the latest phases of German theological thought, I desire to point, in the first place, to the fact that in the field of Biblical studies the old query, "What is the Bible?" is still in the very center of discussion, and is still answered in two radically different ways. The detailed answers are manifold; but in examining them as to their great fundamental conceptions, we are compelled, I think, to distinguish two great groups of answers.

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

One class of theologians looks upon the Bible as a book, or rather a collection of books, in which, and through which, God in some way speaks to man through the experiences of individuals and nations. Others consider the Bible as a collection of books in which man speaks to God and of God.

It is the old question as to revelation which divides the Biblical scholars of to-day

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into two camps. The definitions of the term "revelation" vary considerably; but, making allowance for all diversities, we again and again confront the question: "Is the Bible a record of what God, the living, personal God, actually did and said in order to give to mankind a knowledge of His character and will? Or is the Bible a record of what a small but highly important part of mankind, in the course of centuries of searching, thought to be the nature and will of God?" Do we find in the Bible Divine verities, or do we find human aspirations and longings, and fears and hopes? Is the main current in this book from God to man, or is it from man to God?

The question penetrates still deeper. Is there such a thing as Divine revelation? Or is not in fact what was formerly called revelation, nothing but the necessary and spontaneous development of forces inherent in human nature?

We simply mention the question to point out the fact that it is *the* question which separates the scholars of to-day. We can not discuss the problem itself. But two or

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three things are evident: 1. The question is as old as the hills. Merely the form in which it is presented and the means which are applied to solve it are new. That is to say, they correspond with modern methods of investigation and the present status of knowledge, or, at least, supposed knowledge. 2. The answer to this question is not the result of an impartial study of the Biblical records themselves, but is determined by our "Weltanschauung;" that is, our *a priori* conception of the final cause of the universe. 3. The answer to this question which every scholar virtually gives before he begins his Biblical studies, determines his whole attitude towards the contents of the Biblical books, whatever his methods of investigation, or his scholastic attainments, or his intellectual powers may be.

These considerations, which present themselves as the result of the study of the history of Biblical investigation and of the present status of Biblical science, show that the conclusions presented by Biblical scholars as the results of their investigations depend, as to their theological, vital signifi-

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cance, not so much upon linguistic learning, or archæological discoveries, or critical acumen, or historical insight, or philosophical penetration, but, after all, more upon the personal preconceived beliefs of the individual scholar. The old Latin saying, "*Pecus est quod theologum facit*" (it is the heart that makes the theologian), is still true. That is to say, the personal relation which the student sustains toward the spiritual, experimental truths recorded in the Bible, the personal relation to God, determines his theology.¹

THE RELIGION OF THE BIBLE.

Present Biblical discussions in Germany do not concern various interpretations of given texts, nor questions of literary authorship. The literary problems of sources and dates and names are certainly being discussed, but only incidentally. The real problems go much deeper. The literary questions, after all, touch only the surface. There was a time when it was thought that the truth of Christianity depended on the

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results of literary or, later, of historical criticism, and a good many good people were afraid that the foundations of our faith would be shaken, if scholars should reach the conclusion that certain Biblical books were written in a different time and by a different author than was commonly held according to tradition. This time is passed. Suppose it were settled beyond the shadow of a doubt who wrote every word of the Pentateuch, or every word of the Book of Isaiah, there still remains the more important question: Do these words contain in some way an authoritative message from God to man, or are they the expression of human attempts to know God and serve Him according to the supposed knowledge?

Try as we may, we can not escape this question. It confronts every subject of modern Biblical research; it lies at the root of every problem in Biblical investigation.

This will be made clear by glancing at the questions which are at present in the center of the conflict. The most important ones may be summarized somewhat like this:

What is the origin, genesis, and develop-

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ment of the religion of which the Old and the New Testaments are the official records?

Is this religion a purely natural product, or does it show any evidences of supernatural influence?

Can the teachings of the Old Testament be traced to Babylonian or other Oriental sources, or are these teachings in whole or in part through Divine revelation?

Is the Biblical religion the absolute religion, or perchance only the best among many, each of which has its virtues?

Did the Gospel as Christ originally proclaimed it contain any of the Christology of John and of Paul, or of the atonement theory of the latter; or is what is generally accepted as orthodox theology, really an addition made to original Christianity by the Apostle Paul, so that the latter, rather than Jesus himself, is the founder of Christianity as held and taught by the Church?

These are matters which touch, as John Wesley would say, the very roots of the Christian religion.

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PECULIARITIES OF THE PRESENT CONFLICT.

It is due to this fact that the line of demarcation between conservative and liberal theologians in Germany is drawn quite sharply to-day. Germans, as a rule, are very unwilling to waive questions of minor importance and unite on essential points. They are great sticklers for details, and are very slow to unite in any common cause with any one who does not agree with them in nearly every opinion. What has been true in the political life of the Germans for nearly a thousand years is true also in the realm of scholarship. The very fact that of late first things are being placed first, and that scholars representing different schools of thought found it possible to overlook minor differences and unite in a common cause, shows that, to their minds, the very fundamentals of Christianity are at stake in the conflict which is raging now. The lines are drawn much sharper now than they were even ten years ago. Almost every theologian of note is associated with the "moderns," as the liberals are generally

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called, or with the "positives." Both parties issue a series of learned commentaries and text-books, popular pamphlets, magazines, and all of these publications have on their title-pages long lists of names of their regular contributors. A man belongs either to the contributors to the "Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher," and that means he is a liberal, or to the contributors to the "Biblische Zeit- und Streitfragen," and that means he is a conservative as far as the great fundamental facts of historical Christianity are concerned, whatever his views may be regarding questions of literary criticism.²

Another notable characteristic of present discussion is the fact that the battle is being fought, not only in the secluded lecture-rooms of the universities, and by means of learned monographs and heavy volumes which only a few specialists study, but that the results of scholarship are being popularized and scattered broadcast in the form of inexpensive pamphlets and in magazines. Until quite recently the German professor disdained most cordially to step down into

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the walks of the common people and to instruct the masses. He wrote his books and treatises for the learned specialists, leaving to his pupils the task of gradually popularizing his discoveries and conclusions. But now he finds himself compelled to write, in addition to his learned books, popular pamphlets. The average man wants to know from the scholar himself what he is doing, and wants to form his own judgment.

This demand for generalization and popularization of learning is certainly very encouraging, but it is fraught with the danger of scattering in the garb of established truth what are in fact merely hypothetical conjectures, and also of unduly disquieting and exciting a great many honest, truth-loving folk, because "a little knowledge" and half-truths are dangerous things. There is also a great temptation to play to the galleries, to coin and use popular catchwords, to rely for success upon the applause of the crowd instead of depending upon the power of the truth. It can not be said that recent German theology has fully escaped this danger. Moreover, when we deal in a popular way

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with subjects which are of prime importance to the spiritual welfare of man, which determine the course of his present life and his hopes for the future, it would seem that the utmost care and reluctance are imperative, lest irreparable damage be done.

The methods of investigation are the same with liberals and with conservatives,—their conclusions as to the literary questions are at times in perfect agreement; but the starting points are different, the spirit in which the investigation is carried on is different, and the conclusions are so widely different that the metaphor of the “impassable gulf” between the two views, which the elder Delitzsch first used nearly a generation ago, holds true to-day more than ever.

THE “RELIGIONSGESCHICHTLICHE” POINT OF VIEW—ITS ORIGIN AND METHOD.

The one word which is used to-day more than any other in reference to Biblical studies, and which is the chosen watchword that unites the various wings of the liberal camp, is the word “Religionsgeschichte.” I

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must confess I know of no word in the English language which would adequately express the idea contained in this rather lengthy German word. I have asked a number of American scholars and found that they were in the same predicament. Of course *Religionsgeschichte* means, literally translated, "history of religion," and the adjective "*religionsgeschichtliche*" might be rendered by "historico-religious;" but I fear these English words do not as yet give the full meaning of the German expression.

What is really meant is the view which considers the religion of the Bible as the necessary product of the evolution of the religious life and thought of mankind in the past. The religion of the Bible, it is claimed, can not be understood when isolated, but must be studied in connection with all other religions, and its various phases may be explained by the process of historical growth and by the interchange of religious ideas among various peoples.

This view is not the capricious notion of some scholar or clique of scholars, elaborated

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for the purpose of attacking Christianity. It is rather to be understood as the outcome of the development of historical and scientific methods of investigation and of our present mode of thinking. The whole trend of thought and the method of investigation during the last century have been from the metaphysical and dogmatic to the experimental and historical. The empirical methods are now in vogue in all fields of research. Investigation is no longer dominated by metaphysical conceptions, but starts from experience,—that is to say, from a close study of the *facts* or phenomena in the case; proceeds to study and compare all related facts or phenomena, then discloses the laws governing the phenomena, and finally places the single fact or phenomenon in its proper class or order. Thus the immense mass of seemingly isolated and disconnected phenomena are shown to be component parts of a whole, subject to the same great laws, reducible to the same few, fundamental principles.

The two keys which have unlocked the doors to so many secrets of the universe,

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and have made possible the success of modern science, are analysis and comparison. To analyze the object under consideration into its component elements, then to compare these elements with as many related and contrasted elements as possible, and thus to understand and use the object for our purposes, is the scientific process of to-day. We have been trained in this method until our whole mode of thinking unconsciously runs in this channel.

The theologian is a child of his time. He works under the same laws of thought as does the man of science. His particular branch of investigation is subject to the same methods that are applied in other fields. Thus it seems perfectly legitimate that the same process of analysis and comparison is being applied to Biblical science and to the study of the Christian religion. I find no fault with the process nor with the principle. It is fair, it is legitimate. The trouble arises when the principle is over-worked to such an extent that the characteristic peculiarities of a given object are lost in the process. I have no objection if a

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man, upon a close analysis of my nature, finds in me some animal traits and compares me in these points with certain animals. But I should object emphatically if he should carry his analysis and comparison so far that he finds in me nothing whatever that differentiates me from an animal, and consequently proceeds to call me an animal and treats me as one.

The principle of analysis as applied to the Biblical writings was for a time so overworked that almost every page of the Bible presented an incongruous conglomerate of contradictory sources, and documents, and fragments, and alterations, and interpolations, and editorial glosses, and deuteroclassical remarks. I am glad to state that recent works indicate that a reaction has set in. Repeated, deliberate, unbiased investigation of the whole material on hand establishes more and more the conviction that the main reason for a great many additions and alterations of the text is to be found in the "inner consciousness" of the individual scholar. But the inner consciousness is not a very important factor in modern scientific

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methods. It belongs to the realm of philosophy; and the history of philosophy is, according to one of its famous professors, "the history of the vagaries and errors of the human mind."

Of greater importance at the present time is the application of the principle of comparison. Comparative history of religions is a distinctively modern branch of learning, because not until recently was it possible to study all the great religions of the world from their own sources. Pick and spade and the laborious efforts of patient scholars have given the key to the languages of dead and buried peoples that lived near the cradle of the human race. World-wide commerce, world-wide politics, world-wide missions, have brought us in close contact with other world-wide religions. Our missionaries in the foreign field as well as our scholars at home—some by personal observation and others by poring over strange old writings—find that in other religions very many ideas, beliefs, usages, and rites exist which are similar to many we find recorded in the Bible. Sacrifices and

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miracles, belief in theophanies, incarnation, atonement, immortality, can be noticed as integral parts of some non-Christian religions. Recent discoveries have brought to light a mass of Oriental, Greek, Roman, Jewish literature, folk-lore, popular superstitions, which show powerful currents of thought quite apart from the official religions of the priests and poets. This whole chaotic mass is being diligently searched, and it yields a number of parallels to Biblical narratives and accounts. The whole immense field, not only of religion but also of philosophy, of folk-lore, of superstition, of popular literature, of rites and customs, in short of civilization in its various forms and manifestations, is made tributary to the historico-religious explanation of the religion of the Bible.

Now consider for a moment this twofold process of analysis and comparison, and add to it as the impelling force the dogma of evolution from lower, cruder, less developed forms to higher, more developed and diversified forms by means of action and counter-action and mutual fertilization, and you

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have the explanation of the modern liberal view of the origin and development of the religion of the Bible.

ATTACKS UPON THE WELLHAUSEN THEORY.

In turning now to some details we notice a number of remarkable changes both in Old and in New Testament studies.

The present century commenced with the rapid ascendancy, if not the triumph, of the Wellhausen school of Old Testament criticism. One of the champions of this school wrote: "It conquers one theological chair after another. On account of the inherent truth this view, in spite of the disfavor which is bestowed upon it by conservatives and ecclesiastical authorities, forces men of mature judgment and unquestionable piety to accept and defend it."

We recall very briefly that this view, the real parents of which are Hegel on the one side and Darwin on the other, and which was elaborated by Reuss, Vatke, Graf, Kuenen, and popularized especially by Professor Wellhausen, gives a seemingly logical and

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satisfactory explanation of the origin and growth of Old Testament literature on the basis of purely natural and organic evolution. The children of Israel were originally crude animists; that is, they worshiped spirits, especially the spirits of the dead. Upon migrating to Canaan they came in touch with the higher civilization and more developed religion of the Canaanites, and gradually became polytheists, and then henotheists. One of their deities, the god of thunder and lightning, called Jahwe, became the national god; and his sphere of authority extended as far as the territory occupied by his worshipers. Under the leadership of the prophets, who were men of genius in religious matters, a higher conception of Jahwe was evolved. Jahwe became more spiritual and more ethical; his domain was extended over other nations, his power more exalted. The crude and barbarous forms of worship were supplanted by forms which were more in harmony with the higher conception of Jahwe,—of course not without severe struggles with the ancient accustomed forms. Finally this ethical and

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spiritual religion was gradually enshrined in a mass of ceremonial rites and regulations. The place of the prophet was taken by the priest; and the outcome of this long process of development is the so-called Law of Moses, with its many detailed rites and ceremonies. The order of development according to the Wellhausen theory is: Animism, polytheism, henotheism, ethical monotheism of the prophets, and priestly codification after the exile.

This theory is still held by quite a number of scholars. Wellhausen, Marti, Budde, Nowack, Duhm, Cornill, and others, make it the basis of their investigations.³ But quite recently it has been attacked from different quarters, and it seems as if the whole edifice was badly shattered.

Passing by the researches of Möller and of Dahse, who proved, by an exhaustive study of the Septuagint, that the different names of God used in the Pentateuch can not be considered as indicative of different sources, since the Jews were quite arbitrary in their use of different designations—the Septuagint differing in not less than one

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hundred and eighty places from the Hebrew text—I desire to note especially the book of Professor Bruno Baentsch, entitled, “Ancient-Oriental and Israelitish Monotheism.”⁴ It treats of the crucial question in Old Testament history. This question is: Is the religious history of the Israelites a continuous development from lower conceptions to higher ones, or is it a continuous reaction, a falling back from a higher plane, followed by attempted reforms? In other words: Were the Israelites originally polytheists, turning, in course of their historic development, into monotheists; or were they originally monotheists constantly in danger of adopting the polytheistic beliefs of the surrounding nations? Were the prophets the originators of a higher form of religion; or were they the reformers and spiritual interpreters of the more ancient religion?

Professor Baentsch, while admitting that the popular religion of the Babylonians and Egyptians was polytheistic, concludes that the religion of the thinking people, of the priests and scholars, was of a decidedly monotheistic type. They held that all the

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various deities were, after all, only different manifestations of one god. As early as the time of Abraham this monotheistic tendency was dominant; and as to Moses, there can be no doubt, says Professor Baentsch, that he was the preacher of a religious and practical monotheism.

The little book of Baentsch caused quite a stir among the adherents of the Wellhausen school. And well it might. Baentsch was one of their own number. He was trained in their methods of investigation. In his views as to the literary origin of the Old Testament books he is very radical. But this very fact makes his conclusions the more weighty. If he is able to defend them against the attacks which are sure to come from Wellhausen and his pupils, the very foundation stone of the whole theory of the naturalistic development of the religion of Israel has been knocked out.

Another and growing group of opponents to the Wellhausen school is formed by the newer Semitists under the leadership of Professors Winckler and Hommel and Pastor Alfred Jeremias. Recent discoveries in

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the Orient have shown conclusively that civilization at the time of Moses was by no means as primitive and crude as the Wellhausen theory had made it necessary to hold. The contention that the art of writing was then practically unknown was disproved by the Tel-el-Amarna tablets; the claim that in the time of Moses no nation could have possessed a code of religious and social laws as minute as the laws of Moses, was made utterly untenable by the discovery of the now famous code of Hammurabi, who lived five hundred years before Moses and wrote down laws covering details of religious and civil life just as minute and specific as those contained in the Pentateuch.

The more specific and particular knowledge we gain of the richly developed civilization among the Babylonians previous to the thirtieth century before Christ, the more evident it becomes that the foundation stones of the Wellhausen theory are placed, not upon the rock of facts, but upon the sand of the postulates of the philosophy of Hegel and of the dogma of natural evolution. Dr. Jeremias in his recent book, "The

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Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient Orient," writes correctly: "The school of historic critics commenced their work at a time when the fields of Oriental archæology were still heaps of sand. They are not able to make use of the material discovered in those sand-hills, because it contradicts in all essential points their self-made assertions." And Professor Hommel exclaims triumphantly: "I hear the rustling of the wings of a new period, which passes by the conclusions of this so-called historical criticism as by an antiquated error."

The adherents of the Wellhausen school will either have to build upon a firmer foundation or they will see their house collapse. The interesting feature is that the antagonists who really undermined the walls are not representatives of the traditional school, but are men who were trained in the Wellhausen school.

PAN-BABYLONISM.

To think that this new development means a return to the traditional view would be a mistake. The modern Semitists con-

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sider the literature of the Old Testament only as a subdivision of the great Babylonian Literature. Says Professor Winckler: "The land of Canaan has never been anything but a domain of Babylonian civilization." Babylonian culture, religion, language, mode of thinking, dominated the whole Semitic world, and no Semitic tribe, the Hebrews not excepted, could keep aloof from its all-pervading influence.

Some scholars, as for instance Winckler, Zimmern, Jensen, Delitzsch, extend this Babylonian influence both to form and to substance, claiming Babylonian origin for practically every Hebrew belief, rite, custom, and law. It will be remembered, from the so-called Babel-Bible controversy, that Professor Delitzsch claimed Babylonian origin even for the name of Jahwe—and in our next study we shall see that almost every feature in the picture of Christ is traced back to Babylon—so that there remains hardly anything which could be considered specifically Hebrew. According to these scholars, the historical books of the Old Testament are pamphlets with a religio-political

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tendency. Their religious aim is to inculcate the teaching of monotheism; their political object, to demonstrate the religious claims of the reigning dynasties. The prophets, according to this view, were the political advance-agents of Babylonian imperialism, hired to make Babylonian supremacy plausible to the Hebrews as having been decreed by Jahwe.

This view, which is rightfully called Pan-Babylonianism, eliminates the traits of a special revelation in the life and the religion of the Hebrews. The real source of nearly everything we find in the Bible is Babylon.

A small but very able group of scholars while admitting Babylonian origin for the form of the Biblical accounts, contend for their originality as to substance. The most noted representative of this class is Dr. Alfred Jeremias, whose great book, "The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient Orient," has passed through two editions in a short time. In conjunction with Professor Winckler, he has begun the publication of a series of pamphlets entitled, "Contending for the Ancient Orient." Jeremias is

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convinced that the only key to a proper understanding of the Oriental mode of thinking and "Weltanschauung" is to be found in the astral view of the Orientals. Everything that occurs in space and time is, to them, determined by the constellation of the planets. Changes in the constellation of the planets result in corresponding changes on earth. Nothing ever happens on earth without a corresponding event in the heavenly world. This astral idea gave form and color to all Semitic thinking and writing, just as much as the modern scientific methods determine the mode of thinking of the present generation. The Biblical narratives form no exception to the rule. They are astral in form. But in this form there may be, and there is, says Dr. Jeremias, historical truth; and in the religious teaching there is a Divine revelation. The mythological traits have been eliminated by the Biblical writers under the influence of their higher and purer conceptions of God.

These recent tendencies make it appear that the question as to the place of the Babylonian element in the form and substance of

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the Old Testament writings is at present *the* question in Old Testament studies.

A few years ago the problem was altogether different. Scholars wrestled with the question: Is the course of the history of Hebrew religion as it is given in the Old Testament writings correctly stated; first the law, then the prophets as the spiritual interpreters of the law struggling against constant relapses into polytheistic beliefs and practices? Or is this course entirely wrong? Must we say: First polytheism, then the prophets as the founders of monotheism; and finally, at the close of the national history, the law? Now the question is: Were both lawgivers and prophets, or prophets and lawgivers, whoever may have been first in point of time, originators; or were they imitators and transplanters of ideas and beliefs that have grown in Babylonian soil?

The main work of sane Old Testament scholarship in the immediate future will be to clearly show the proper relation of Babylonian to genuinely Israelitish thought and belief, and to show, not only the possibility,

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but the necessity of some special Divine revelation as the only satisfactory explanation of the unique influence which the Old Testament has exercised in the history of the race.⁵

CONSERVATIVE SCHOLARS.

I can not close this survey without calling attention to a number of Old Testament scholars who patiently and diligently toil on in their hard work, a work which is not often appreciated, more frequently misunderstood even by those who derive the greatest benefit from it. These scholars believe in a Divine revelation; they are opposed to the natural explanation of any scheme of "religionsgeschichtliche" evolution; they consider the religious history of the Hebrew nation as a divinely appointed and guided preparation for the coming salvation through Jesus Christ, but they refuse to be fettered by any iron-clad dogma. They are open to accept whatever seems to be well established, even if it differs from the traditional view, but they do not embrace any new idea simply because it is new and brilliant. The sober,

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painstaking work of men like Professors Oettli, Koeberle, Strack, Lotz, Klostermann, Sellin, König, Orelli, and others, will in course of time clarify our views and establish our faith more firmly. We may not agree with all their conclusions, but time will rectify minor mistakes. On the whole, I think the outlook in the field of Old Testament studies in Germany is more promising than it was even a few years ago. It is true, the critical views concerning the literary origin of the Old Testament books find more general acceptance, but there is a decided tendency towards the traditional view as to the origin and history of the Hebrew religion. That is to say, German theological thought is quite radical touching the less important question of outward form, but is swinging back into a more conservative attitude towards the more important questions regarding the substance and trustworthiness of the Old Testament records.⁶

NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES.

In New Testament studies we observe the very opposite tendency. The views concern-

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ing the literary origin of the New Testament writings are decidedly more conservative than they were a generation or even a decade ago; but opinions on the real contents of these same books are more radical than ever.

It is interesting to note that this retrogressive movement in literary criticism starts with one of the leaders of advanced liberal thought. In 1897 Professor Harnack published his "Chronology of the Ancient Christian Literature," and wrote in the preface the following remarkable paragraph: "There was a time in which scholars thought they were forced to consider the oldest Christian literature, including the New Testament, as a fabric of falsifications and deceptions. This time is passed. For theological science it was an episode during which much has been learned and after which much must be forgotten. The oldest literature of the Church is, in the main and in most details, considered from a literary-historical point of view, true and trustworthy."

This concession was greeted by some con-

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servatives with a shout of joy as indicating a complete change in the position of Harnack; but this is a mistake. Harnack was very careful to distinguish between form and substance, and maintained that his more traditional view regarding the literary form of the New Testament did not in the least change his liberal interpretation of the substance. He makes this very plain in his latest book, published April, 1907. Its title is, "Luke, the Physician," and it is the first installment of a number of studies in New Testament Introduction. On account of its importance I shall quote the whole paragraph:

"The genuine letters of Saint Paul, the writings of Luke, and the Church History of Eusebius are the pillars for our knowledge of Ancient Christianity. Touching the writings of Luke this is not yet sufficiently recognized. The failure to appreciate these writings is due to the fact that criticism thought Luke could not have written them. I hope to show in the following pages that criticism was mistaken and that tradition is right. . . . Ten years ago I wrote

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that, in our view as to the sources of oldest Christianity, we were in a retrogressive movement. Some of my friends found fault with this statement. They will receive herewith a new proof of its truth. My opponents treated this statement much worse. They quoted me as a witness to the fact that we were in a retrogressive movement in our views as to the contents. This is a mistake. I repeat emphatically that in the 'Sachkritik' (the criticism of the contents) many positions appear more and more untenable and must yield to new views. Between the years 30 and 70, in Palestine, more correctly in Jerusalem, has really everything taken place that has subsequently developed. Besides, only Phrygia, with its strong Jewish population, and Asia were of importance. This fact becomes increasingly clear, and will displace the former critical view according to which the fundamental development was supposed to have extended for a period of more than one hundred years, and according to which the whole dispersion was to be considered just as much as Palestine. With regard to the

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chronological frame-work, the majority of the leading persons, and the soil, the old tradition is essentially correct, but beyond this, that is to say in our understanding of the facts themselves, we have to rely upon our own judgment and very frequently can not accept the ideas and explanations of the original writers."

The last sentence shows in what direction the problems in New Testament studies lie. The question is not so much, When and by whom were the New Testament books written? nor even the question, What ideas and interpretations did the original writers mean to convey to their first readers?—but the more important question, Were the original writers correct in their views and interpretations, or are we in a position to improve upon them and see the truth more clearly and fully? From the historical question, What did these writings mean to those who wrote and first read them? German theology is now turning more and more to the question, What do these writings mean to the present generation?⁷

II

THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST.

EVERY old Testament problem becomes in course of time a New Testament question. Every Biblical question places us after a while face to face with Him who is the center of the whole Bible, with Jesus Christ. Thus we see that the Old Testament questions which we discussed in Part I are rapidly becoming the burning problems in New Testament studies, especially in the present discussion over the person and Gospel of Jesus Christ. I shall confine myself to pointing out briefly some of the most interesting and important features of this discussion.

WAS JESUS A REAL, HISTORICAL PERSON?

In the closing years of the eighteenth century the thought was advanced by a number of rationalistic theologians that the doctrines held by the Church and formulated in her creeds were the joint product of New Tes-

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tament religion and Greek philosophy. This thought was taken up by Professor Harnack of Berlin, and in his great work, "History of the Christian Doctrine," he disclosed the complicated process by which the Church in developing her doctrines became Hellenized; thus it was made incumbent upon the student of Church history to extricate, by a process of careful analysis and comparison, the genuinely Christian elements from the meshes of foreign thought. Harnack, it is true, applied this principle only to post-apostolic times, but since the appearance of his book investigation has proceeded along the same lines and is now covering the Biblical writings as well.

Old Testament scholars and Semitists—as Gunkel, Meyer, Meinhold, Gressmann, Winckler, Zimmern, Jensen—followed the traces of Babylonian influences down through the period of later Judaism to New Testament times; New Testament scholars—as Schürer, Baldensperger, Bousset, Pfeiderer, Schmiedel, Holtzmann, Weinel, Wernle, Wrede—studied Greek and Jewish thought in its influence upon the early

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Christian writings. They found it necessary to eliminate first the whole of Johanneine theology as a foreign substance; then they threw overboard the Apostle Paul as the great perverter of the simple teaching of Christ; next they cleared the Synoptical Gospels of all Babylonian, Egyptian, Phrygian, Jewish, Greek, and other foreign matter. They have just about finished this arduous work of purifying and simplifying the Gospels by this double process of "Religionsgeschichtliche" analysis and comparison, in order to discover the real, historical Christ; they meet at the feet of this Christ, to see Him as He really is; but, behold, He is no more! Not a trace of Him is left. Trait after trait, feature after feature, has been analyzed and compared, until neither manger nor cross nor grave, not even His garments, are left. A few years ago we had, by the grace of the most advanced scholarship, at least a plain Galilean peasant with a very good heart. Even if His mind was rather too simple, we were allowed to believe in a kind-hearted carpenter's son, who went about doing good, and to whom at

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least eight rather inoffensive sayings could be historically traced; as, for instance, the saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive;" but even this peasant has evaporated, or, better, the great Babylonian flood which the mighty Bel caused to drown all mankind has completely swallowed up the little that was left of Jesus of Nazareth.

I beg your pardon for this tone of levity. The whole matter would be very serious if it were not so utterly absurd. But the fact is that German theology is just now confronted with the question, Was Jesus Christ a real, historical person, or is He nothing but a literary hero?

From two very different quarters the question as to the historicity of Jesus of Nazareth has been raised. At first blush we may think it is ridiculous to raise the question at all. And so it is. But the very fact that scholars do raise the question and mean to be taken seriously, is the necessary result of tendencies in theology which have been fostered until they have reached this culmination point. And this fact will, I trust, open the eyes of many in Germany,

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and in America as well, who are in the habit of intrusting themselves to the guidance of brilliant and charming leaders without realizing at the start whither they were going.

CHRIST A PRODUCT OF BABYLONIAN MYTHOLOGY.

The first avenue which led to the negation of the historicity of Jesus Christ is the religionsgeschichtliche comparison. The religionsgeschichtliche study of the New Testament aims, as Professor Bousset puts it, "to understand the origin and development of Christianity by means of an investigation of the whole environment of primitive Christianity." Applying this principle to the person and work of Christ, Professor Pfeleiderer of Berlin, in his "Early Conceptions of Christ," finds that "the Christ of the Church has been formed out of those myths and legends which are the common property of religion all over the world. The elements of the figure are roughly separable into five groups. There is Christ, the Son of God; Christ the Conqueror; Christ the Wonder-worker; Christ the Conqueror of

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death and the Life-giver; Christ the King of kings and Lord of lords. The materials for each of these conceptions were taken from various sources. They came from Judaism, from Hellenism, from Mithraism, and the Græco-Egyptian religion, from Zoroastrianism, and even from Buddhism. They came gradually, and gradually the conception took shape."

The specific contribution of Babylonian mythology to the picture of Christ, as depicted in the Gospels, consists, according to Professor Zimmern, of the following points: 1. "The conception of Christ as a pre-mundane, heavenly, divine being, who is at the same time the Creator of the world. 2. The accounts of the miraculous birth of Christ, of the homage offered to the new-born child, and of the persecutions. 3. The conception of Christ as the Savior of the world, and as ushering in a new period of time, appearing as He does in the fullness of time. 4. The conception of Christ as being sent into the world by the Father. 5. The doctrinal aspects of the suffering and death of Christ, apart from the historic facts. 6. The doc-

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trine of the descent of Christ into Hades. 7. The doctrine of the resurrection of Christ on the third day after his death. 8. The doctrine of His ascension after forty days. 9. The doctrine of Christ's glory, sitting at the right hand of God and reigning with the Father. 10. The belief in the coming again of Christ at the end of days in kingly glory, and also of the last conflict with the powers of evil. 11. The idea of the marriage of Christ with his Bride at the beginning of the new time, of the new heaven, and the new earth."

While Professor Zimmern advances these thoughts very carefully and guardedly, Professor Jensen, of the University of Marburg, affirms most positively that the whole life of Christ is essentially a Jewish version of the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epos. His book appeared February, 1907, is a large volume of over one thousand pages, and bears the title, "The Epos of Gilgamesh in the World Literature. The Origins of the Old Testament Patriarch, Prophet, and Redeemer Legends and of the New Testament Jesus Legend."

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The main contention of the book is stated by the author himself in the following words: "That practically all of the Gospel narrative is purely legendary, and that there is no reason at all to consider anything that is told of Jesus as historical. . . . The Jesus legend is an Israelitish Gilgamesh legend. . . . As a Gilgamesh legend the Jesus legend is a sister legend to numerous particularly to most, of the Old Testament, legends." In his concluding chapter Professor Jensen writes: "Jesus of Nazareth, in whom, as in the Son of God and the Savior of the world, Christianity has believed for nearly two thousand years, and who is regarded, even by the most advanced scholarship of our own day, as a good and great man who lived and died the sublime pattern of the ideal ethical life—this Jesus has never lived upon earth; neither has He died, because He is nothing but an Israelitish Gilgamesh. We, the children of a much-lauded time of progress and achievements, we who look down upon the superstitions of the past with a forbearing smile, we worship in our cathedrals and churches, in our meeting-houses and schools,

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in palaces and shanties, a Babylonian deity." I took occasion, in the preceding study, to state that there was a time when critical analysis of the Biblical texts had run wild. Professor Jensen's book is comparison run mad.

I should not have taken the time to quote from Jensen, but should have dismissed his book with a forbearing smile, if he were not taken seriously by a number of scholars. To my amazement I noticed that as careful and sane a scholar as Professor Zimmern wrote an extended review of the book, approving it almost without qualification, and saying: "Jensen will hardly succeed at once in seeing his ideas accepted. But truth is not depending upon immediate success, and will in this case, even as in others, be victorious, though not without great trouble, and only slowly. The weight of facts which this book adduces is too immense."

The other reason why I referred to this book is to show that the logical and unavoidable result of explaining everything distinctively Christian in the Bible by applying the principle of comparison, or, in other

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words, that the strict and unhampered following of the "religionsgeschichtliche" method, as it is in vogue at present, must lead to absurdities.¹

THE MYTH OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Allow me a digression. I wish to apply these same principles of analysis and comparison to a modern personality, following strictly the methods of Professor Jensen. Suppose Lord Macaulay's famous New Zealander, whom he pictures as standing upon a broken arch of London Bridge, in the midst of a vast solitude, to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's, should come over to America and dig in the sand-hills covering the Congressional Library in Washington. He finds a great pile of literature which originated in the first few years of the twentieth century. In the very learned book which our New Zealand scholar publishes he refers to the fact that at the beginning of the twentieth century the head of the great American nation was supposed to be a strong and influential man by name of Theodore Roosevelt. His name has gone

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down in history, but our scholar proves that Theodore Roosevelt was no historical person at all. He never lived; he is merely the personification of tendencies and mythological traits then dominant in the American nation.

For instance, this legendary hero is commonly pictured with a big stick. Now, this is plainly a mythological trait, borrowed from the Greeks and Romans, and represents really the thunderbolt of Jupiter. He is pictured as wearing a broad-brimmed hat and large eye-glasses. This mythological feature is borrowed from old Norse mythology, and represents Woden endeavoring to pierce through the heavy clouds of fog covering his head. A great many pictures show the legendary hero smiling and displaying his teeth. This is a very interesting feature, showing the strong African influences in American civilization. Many contradictory legends are told about this man. He was a great hunter; he was a rough rider; but he was also a scholar and author of a number of learned books. He lived in the mountains, on the prairie, and in a large city. He was a leader in war, but also a

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peacemaker. It is said that he was appealed to by antagonizing factions, even by warring nations, to arbitrate. It is self-evident that we have here simply the personification of prominent character traits of the American people at various stages of their historical development. They loved to hunt, to ride, to war; reaching a higher stage of civilization, they turned to studying, writing books, making peace; and all these contradictory traits were, in course of time, used to draw the picture of this legendary national hero. Some mythological features have not yet been fully cleared up; for instance, that he is often represented in the shape of a bear or accompanied by bears. For a while these "Teddy Bears" were nearly in every house, and it seems as if they even were worshiped, at least by the children. There is no doubt that some remote astral conception lies at the root of this rather puzzling feature.

But two reasons are conclusive to establish the legendary thesis. 1. The American nation, at the beginning of the twentieth century, had hardly emerged from the

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crudity of fetichism and witchcraft. Many traces of fortune-telling, charming, sorcery, and other forms of superstition can be found by studying the daily papers. Even this hero Roosevelt was given to some such superstition. Whenever he desired to bring any one under his spell and charm him, he took him by the hand and pronounced a certain magical word. As far as I can discover it spells something like "dee-lighted."

2. The other conclusive proof is the name. Theodore is taken from the language of a people representing the southern part of Europe and means "Gift of God;" Roosevelt is taken from the language of a people representing the northern part of Europe, and means "Field of Roses." The idea is evident: This hero personifies the union of the two European races which laid the foundations of early American civilization—the Romanic and the Teutonic races; and the Americans imagined that a man who united in himself all those wonderful traits of character must necessarily be a miraculous "Gift of God," and furthermore they thought that if a man personifying their ideals really had

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full sway, their country would be changed to a "Field of Roses."

This explanation is strictly scientific. No doubt a good many machine politicians and heads of trusts would be delighted to awake some morning and find out that Theodore Roosevelt is nothing but a mythological figure. But, thank God, he is a living fact and tremendous power in the life of our nation. And so is Jesus Christ.

THE CHRIST OF LIBERAL THEOLOGY.

The other avenue which led to the negation of the historicity of Jesus Christ is the well-known modernization and reduction of the life and work of Jesus which liberal theologians have accomplished by means of literary and historical criticism. The history of the critical investigation of the life of Jesus during the last hundred and fifty years is an intensely interesting and instructive study. It has recently been summarized by Dr. A. Schweitzer in his book, "From Reimarus to Wrede." (Reimarus, the contemporary of Lessing, whose "Wolfenbüttler Fragmente" mark the beginning of

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modern critical research in the life of Christ; Professor William Wrede, who died in November, 1906, was one of the most prominent liberal theologians.) A more popular presentation of the subject, covering the latest phases, is given by Professor Grützmacher in his booklet, "Is the Liberal Picture of Jesus Modern?"²

Without going into the history of this investigation I merely state that the life of Christ as it is presented now by all liberal theologians—as Harnack, Bousset, Weinel, Wrede, Holtzmann, Jülicher, Wernle³—as the established result of critical scientific research, is gained, not from an examination of the whole New Testament material, but by means of a complicated process of finding the alleged true sources from which this life may be construed. The oldest portions of the New Testament literature, the Pauline writings, can not be considered as genuine sources, because, as Professor Wernle states, "Jesus knew nothing of that which to St. Paul is everything. That Jesus regarded himself as an object of worship must be doubted; that He ascribed any

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meritorious atonement to His death is altogether improbable. Paul is not a disciple of Jesus. He is a new phenomenon. Paul is much further removed from Jesus in his teaching than he would seem to be when regarded only chronologically."

We turn now to the four Gospels, but of these "the Gospel of John can in no wise be considered a historical source," says Harnack; and he is seconded in this assertion by all liberals. Says Wernle: "St. John must retire in favor of the Synoptic Gospels as source of the life of Christ. Jesus was as the Synoptics represent Him, not as St. John depicts Him." And again: "In the first Gospels there is nothing taught concerning redemption, atonement, regeneration, reception of the Holy Spirit. An altogether different picture is presented by the greater part of the other New Testament writings, especially by the writings of Paul and John."

But even the Synoptic Gospels have to be critically analyzed in order to find the true portrait of Christ. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke, especially in their ac-

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counts of the infancy and of the death of Jesus and of the events that took place after his death, and in many other instances as well, are rather a portraiture of the crude beliefs of the early Christian Churches than a historically trustworthy account of the real facts. Even in the Gospel of Mark, which is considered the oldest and purest, we find, according to Professor Wernle, that "the historic portrait of Jesus is quite obscured; His person is placed in a grotesquely fantastic light."

Thus analytical criticism is compelled to search for the sources of the Gospels, and it has found principally two of them, namely, the older Mark document, the source of the present Gospel of St. Mark, and the Logia, or collection of sayings of Jesus, the supposed source of the Gospel of St. Matthew. It is certainly true that our present Gospels are based upon previous sources; but, in the absence of fixed data, it is impossible to determine with any degree of certainty just what those sources contained. But critical acumen can not rest satisfied even with those sources. Says

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Wernle: "They are not free from the possibility of modification and adulteration. They represent the belief of the Christians as it developed in the course of four decades." It is therefore needful to distinguish between genuine elements and later additions in those sources. This is an exceedingly difficult and delicate task, especially since we do not know, for a certainty, the form nor the substance of those sources. How is it accomplished? I alluded in the preceding study to the "inner consciousness" of many textual critics. I am reminded of this when I hear Harnack blandly say, "Whoever has a good eye for the vital and a true sense of the really great must be able to see it, and distinguish between the kernel and the transitory husk;" or when I hear Professor Pfeiderer speak of "healthy eyes;" or see how Bousset finds the proofs of genuineness in the fact that "it is psychologically comprehensible," or Mehlhorn in the fact that "it could not have been invented." It is with a sense of relief that we read Professor Bousset's refreshingly *naïve* concession that where we find the

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sources too meager "we may occasionally make use of our imagination."

Unfortunately our imagination is not a safer guide in historical and scientific matters than is our inner consciousness, and the eyesight of no two men is exactly alike. A few years ago there was in Berlin an exhibition of paintings representing scenes from the life of Christ. Hundreds of paintings were exhibited; they were very interesting to look at, but they did not contribute anything to our knowledge of the real appearance of Jesus Christ. They were nothing but the portraitures of the conceptions which the various artists entertained as to the features of Christ. Each artist portrayed his own ideal of Jesus. And some of the portraits looked so strange that no one would have thought it a picture of Jesus Christ if it had not been labeled as such.

This is precisely the case with all these modern attempts to write a life of Jesus Christ minus St. Paul, minus St. John, minus Matthew, Luke, and Mark. If you examine the character of this Jesus closely,

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you will find that He is really a portraiture of what the author considers his ideal of a pure and holy life, clothed in the garb of an Oriental peasant two thousand years ago.

Time prevents me from reproducing here the details of this twentieth-century ideal in its strange and ancient environments; it is a picture of a man from whom every supernatural, miraculous, mysterious trait has been erased. "Jesus has nowhere overstepped the limits of the purely human," says Bousset; and again: "We do no longer start with the thought that Jesus was absolutely different from us; that He was from above, we from below. And consequently we do no longer speak of the Divinity of Christ."

Doubts and fears, joys and griefs, moments of ecstasy and of utter dejection, all the changing moods of a poor human heart, may be found in His life. "He was a poor, disquieted man, at times shouting with joy, at times woefully despondent," writes Gustav Frenssen, and adds, "Sometimes He was treading upon the very borderland of exalted insanity."

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On the whole, Jesus was the personification of faith in God, brotherly love, and faith in immortality; at times He seems to have taken Himself as the Messiah of His people; in everything He was subject to the limitations of mankind. There is only one difference between this modern view and the old rationalistic view. While the old rationalists, by all sorts of exegetical jugglery, vainly attempted to show that their human and purely naturalistic view of Jesus was really contained in the New Testament records, the modern rationalists are outspoken in their assertion that their own view is radically different from that of the New Testament writers. They do not in the least try to bridge over this chasm, but state emphatically as Jülicher does, "Where even the first apostles have totally misunderstood Jesus we must try to understand Him better."

This is the picture of Christ which the leading liberal theologians of to-day have scattered broadcast in tens of thousands of copies of cheap pamphlets, which is described Sunday after Sunday in thousands

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of pulpits both in Germany, and, somewhat modified and as yet retouched, also in America. But again a reaction has set in, the sweep of which can not as yet be wholly comprehended.

THE VERDICT OF INFIDELITY.

A pupil of modern liberal theologians, the former pastor Gustav Frenssen, who is a novel-writer of great force, wrote a novel "Hilligenlei" (Holy Land), of which hundreds of thousands of copies were sold. The hero of this novel, Kai Jans, is, as is generally admitted, a true reproduction of the picture of Christ as painted by the liberal theologians. This book, as well as some other recent publications, gave rise to a number of reviews of the "modern Christ" by eminent literary men and by philosophers who do not claim to be Christians, but are known and desire to be known as leaders of free thought. Some of them were formerly theologians, but have lost their faith in the fundamental truths of Christianity. Of these writers I mention Adolf Bartels, editor of the "Kunstwart," Leo Berg,

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Eduard von Hartmann, A. Drews, W. von Schopenhauer, C. A. Bernoulli, Dr. Kalthoff, the President of the League of Monists, and also two physicians, Doctors De Loosten and E. Rasmussen.⁴

What do these men say? The two physicians claim that the only rational explanation of this Christ is to consider Him as one of the great pathological figures in the world's history; that means, in other words, that He was partially insane. The others say exactly what conservative theologians—as B. Weiss, Ihmels, Kähler, Zahn, Haussleiter, Grützmacher, Lemme, and others—always have said against this naturalistic representation of Jesus, and what was ignored by liberal theologians. But here are men who were trained in the methods of Pfleiderer, Bousset, and their kin; men who possess as much critical acumen and philosophic penetration as do the liberal leaders; men whose thinking is in no wise fettered by dogmatic prejudices,—and their almost unanimous verdict is really remarkable.

All of them say that this picture of Christ is both unscientific and unhistorical. It is

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unscientific, because the methods applied are purely subjective. Says Dr. Kalthoff, after analyzing the Jesus of a number of modern theologians: "Every scholar leaves of the words of Christ only what he can make use of according to his preconceived notions of what is historically possible. Lacking every historical definiteness, the name of Jesus has become an empty vessel into which every theologian pours his own thoughts and ideas."

Eduard von Hartmann shows that the only results which this method of analytical criticism has arrived at are negative results. "The historic Christ remains a problematical figure which is of no religious value at all." W. von Schnehen quotes the liberal Professor Steck, who says, "A strict application of these principles of research will show that there is not one solitary word of Jesus of which we know for certain that it was spoken thus and not otherwise by Jesus," and uses this assertion to prove that all pictures of Christ are admittedly uncertain, and consequently unscientific.

But another argument which is of much

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greater import is advanced. Kalthoff, von Schnehen, and von Hartmann reason thus: If the liberal theologians admit that their picture of Christ is different from that which was believed by the Church during all the centuries of her existence — different from that of St. Paul, of St. John, of the Synoptic Gospels, of the sources of the Synoptic Gospels; if, as Professor Pfeiderer says, "Jewish prophecy, rabbinical teachings, Oriental gnosis, and Greek philosophy had already put the colors on the palette from which the picture of Christ was painted in the New Testament writings;" if, as is admitted, the Church was built from the very beginning, not upon the Galilean peasant Jesus, but upon the Christ, the Son of God; and if this Christ is nothing but the creation of speculative theologians, as Paul and John,—then there is no need at all of a historic Christ. It is not necessary at all that a man Jesus of Nazareth should ever have lived in order to explain the fact of Christianity.

Even from the point of view of present religious needs of human nature this Jesus

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of liberal theology is unnecessary. Orthodox theology is Christ-centric; liberal theology is God-centric. "Back to Christ," exclaims Professor Wernle, "but only as a means to return to God the Father. God the Father is to regain that supremacy over our lives which Jesus had intended to give Him, but of which theological dogma has deprived Him." The modern thinkers mentioned above can not see the need of any human mediator between God and man. They want a living, present God, and a constant present communion with Him, if they want a God at all. Neither a Catholic saint nor a dead Jew is to stand between their own lives and God. Says Professor Drews, "The belief in the personal grandeur and the beauty of character of the man Jesus has nothing to do with religion." W. von Schnehen writes still more explicitly: "Even if God should have revealed Himself in the personality of the man Jesus of Nazareth, it is utterly useless to me, unless God reveals Himself to me likewise. If He does reveal Himself to me, then His revelation to Jesus is of no more import to me than

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is His revelation to any good man or His revelation in nature. . . . The exemplary moral and religious perfection of Jesus is of no benefit whatever to any one except he has in his being the same moral and religious forces which were in Jesus. But if these powers are inherent in him and can be developed in his life, then it makes no difference by whom they become energized, by Jesus or by some one else."

Quite pathetic are words of Professor Drews, showing, as they do, the restlessness of an honest but irreligious mind and the dissatisfaction with substitutes in religion: "We are consumed by a burning desire for salvation and we should be satisfied with this fabric of the theologians, this picture of the historic Christ, who changes His features under the hands of every professor of theology who works at it. We need the presence of God, and not His past." And Dr. Kalthoff writes quite correctly: "A God in whom we must believe because scholars say that two thousand years ago the son of a Jewish carpenter believed in Him, is

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not worth the printer's ink that is being squandered about Him."

THE CHRIST OF THE NEW TESTAMENT THE ONLY CHRIST.

I will come to a close. Why did I ask you to listen to all these quotations? For two reasons: In the first place, I desired to show that the modern method of subjective analysis of the sources and of the "religionsgeschichtliche" comparison leads, and as a matter of fact did lead, to a complete negation of the historicity of the person of Christ. In the second place, I wished to point out that the modern, liberal conception of Christ, which strips Him of all distinctively Divine elements and makes a pure man of Him, be He ever so good and holy, be He ever so sublime a pattern of a perfect life, be He ever so trustworthy a guide to God, does not and can not satisfy the modern man. He repudiates this man-made Jesus, and even accuses his makers of lack of scientific spirit and of dishonesty. Says von Schnehen: "Christianity is not belief in the man Jesus,

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but faith in Christ the Savior and Son of God. Not the man Jesus, the lovable preacher and teacher of morals, who did not shrink back from death in obedience to what was His conviction, has conquered the world, but Christ the Son of God, who died upon the cross in order to redeem a lost world. This is the Christ of the Gospels and of the Church. It is dishonest to call this modern view of Jesus and of His religion Christian or evangelical."

It has ever been the mistake of rationalism to try to make Christianity acceptable to the average man by taking off the edges of its supernaturalism. It has ever been a failure, and ever will be so.

The testimonies of these modern men show that the portrait of Christ painted by liberal theologians of our own day is an utter failure. They prove that the modern man, as well as man centuries ago, needs and wants exactly the Christ of the Church and the Gospels or no Christ at all.

In studying present conditions in America I am inclined to believe that one of the great dangers of the American pulpit con-

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sists in voicing, somewhat rashly and heedlessly, the views of modern liberal theologians if they only be new, brilliant, reasonable, and can be covered by the names of renowned scholars, without duly considering the necessary and logical consequences. It seems to me the American pulpit would do well to heed this lesson from the latest phase of German theological thought: The Christ who will conquer the hearts of men in the twentieth century is not the bloodless, goody-goody, nor the manly, heroic son of a Jewish carpenter, but the Son of God, the Christ of the Gospels, the Savior of mankind, the risen and living Christ as He has been preached through the centuries.

And even more: The only true, historically and scientifically true, picture of the life and work and Gospel of Christ is the one which is given in the New Testament as a whole. The modern historians and philosophers tell the modern liberal theologians in very plain language to be honest and quit calling themselves preachers of the Gospel of Christ if they do not believe in the Christ of the Gospels, and quit calling

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their congregations Churches of Christ if they do not believe in the Christ of the Church. Modern man is opposed to all shams and insincerities. He has no patience with men who, while using the old phraseology, cleverly substitute their self-made Jesus for the God-given Christ. The Christ can not be changed. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for evermore.

III

THE SO-CALLED "MODERN-POSITIVE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY."

WE hear it stated very frequently that we live in an age of transition. This is true in one sense of the word, but again, almost every age is an age of transition. The world moves, and as long as it does move, new conditions will and must arise, and the adjustment to new conditions is really what we call transition.

But it is equally true that the world has moved so rapidly in the last half of the nineteenth century that the process of adjustment in nearly every sphere of our individual and social thinking and living has been made quite difficult. The changes have been so startling that they have caused, and are still causing, states of feverish excitement. Feverish conditions make a person very restless. But fever is, after all, not a disease in itself; it is rather the heightened activity of the body, caused by an effort to fight off danger and adjust itself to new conditions.

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It is a fact that in theology a state of unrest exists. We do not gain anything by bewailing this fact. The only sensible thing to do is to look for the causes of the unrest, and to apply the proper remedies—of course, not opiates and anæsthetics, but restoratives. Feverish conditions are not necessarily causes for alarm; but neither is the body at such times able to do its accustomed work. Periods of theological unrest have never been very fruitful in spiritual results.

Allow me to quote a paragraph from a very sane article by Professor W. T. Davidson in the July number of the *London Quarterly Review*: "If religion in any country is living and active, it must be influenced by all that affects the real life of the nation. If intellectual or social movements pervade the whole of Western civilization, no one can wonder if religion feels the heaving of the subsequent tidal wave. It would be a bad sign if this were not the case. When great ideas emerge and deepen and spread, ideas which affect men's views of the universe and their whole outlook upon life, then, if religion is not correspondingly

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deepened and widened, this is a proof that it is amongst the things which wax old and are ready to vanish away. Such movements of thought as are represented by the names of Hegel in one direction and Darwin in another are like volcanic disturbances, the full effect of which is not discernible till some time after the original seismic shock. In the departments of physical science, of philosophy in general and psychology in particular, the changes during the last fifty years have been momentous. The effect of recent discoveries in relation to the ultimate constitution of matter can not as yet be estimated. Biblical criticism has produced changes in the mode of viewing the Bible, partly as regards its contents, but still more as regards the method of understanding, interpreting, and applying its doctrine, the significance of which is visible to all with eyes to see. Finally, social movements are advancing with almost incredible rapidity, and religion and theology are feeling the impact as of an incoming tide of revolution."

Every age needs a translation of the un-

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changing truths of the Christian religion into its own terms; that is to say, into terms which the age can understand. It is the proper office of theology to find those terms which interpret to each generation the Christian truths, to take the vessels which are used for every-day purposes and pour into them the life-giving waters of God's revelation. Thus it is certainly true that theological formulas are not absolutely fixed; it is true in a certain sense that each succeeding age needs its own creed.

TWO EXTREME VIEWS.

Every age, and ours as well, witnesses two extreme and really dangerous tendencies. There is on the one side a well-meaning but utterly useless conservatism; an obstinate clinging to old formulas which were useful in their time, but which have become antiquated and have lost their significance. Insistence upon that which has become meaningless will lead to the loss of contact with the modern world. The Christian religion becomes a venerable relic of past times, honored and revered on account

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of its grand history, but something the practical use of which our practical age fails to discern. The theology of the Church is, then, like a magnificent cathedral, with lofty gothic arches, beautiful rosettes, richly carved altar and pulpit, artistically painted windows. The exquisite harmony of the subdued colors appeals to our esthetic nature; we admire the bold, yet restful, architecture; fragrance of incense fills the air; the sonorous chant of richly robed priests awakens the echo in all the many niches; our thoughts are drawn away from the bustle of modern life, back into the mysterious past; they may even be drawn heavenward; but when we step out again into the bright sunlight we are painfully aware that the cathedral stands for a different world from the one we live in; the charm has lost its power; all that is left is a pleasant recollection.

On the other side there is a tendency, and I believe it is even more pronounced in our day, to recklessly throw away the old formulas and accommodate the Christian truths to every theory and fancy which happens

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to fascinate men's minds. The line which separates form and substance is lost sight of, and, in the endeavor to make the Christian faith acceptable to the modern man, the contents are changed and modernized. Theology is made up to date, it is true, but it has lost its distinctive characteristic of being a Divine revelation, and has become the fashionable philosophy of the day, from which men turn away when some other philosophy strikes their fancy. The theology of the Church is no longer like a cathedral; it is rather—well, we can not exactly make out whether it is a theater or a gymnasium or a clubhouse; it is something very, very modern, but it is hard to say what it really is. But to-morrow we may see something which is still more modern, and we always prefer the latest.

Unreasonable conservatism and senseless liberalism have ever been the Scylla and Charybdis of theology. The difficult but none the less necessary task is to interpret the immutable facts of the Christian faith to the modern man in such a manner that

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he knows what we are talking about; that he sees and feels the intimate and necessary connection between the eternal, unchanging Divine world and the world in which he moves; to do this without in any way changing the essential contents.

Our glance at recent views concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ has shown us the danger of so changing the original picture that the features can no longer be recognized, and that the picture is therefore rejected by the very men for whom it was painted.

In German theology at the present time we notice these two tendencies. We find hard and fast conservatism; a theology based upon the great confessions of faith, unwilling to yield one iota of them. We find radical and reckless liberalism; a theology which discards all former standards and authorities and attempts to accommodate the Christian faith to every changing notion. And find also several attempts at a mediating theology.

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MEDIATING THEOLOGY.

Perhaps the most noteworthy efforts in this direction were, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the theology of Schleiermacher, and at the end of the century the theology of Ritschl. The first named popularized his theology in the famous "Addresses on Religion." The leading thoughts of Ritschl found brilliant presentation in Professor Harnack's lectures entitled, "The Essence of Christianity," or "What is Christianity?" Both books are sincere and prompted by the best of motives, but both sacrifice too much of the essential contents of the Christian faith.

The last few years have brought to light another effort, made by a number of conservative theologians. Their aim may be stated in the term which they themselves use—namely, to construct a system of Modern-Positive theology. The leaders in this movement are Professor Reinhold Seeberg, of the University of Berlin; Richard Grützmacher, of the University of Rostock—which is, by the way, the most

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conservative and orthodox Lutheran university in Germany—Superintendent Theodore Kaftan, of Schleswig; Professor Karl Beth, of the University of Vienna. Others who might be mentioned are Professor F. Kropatschek, of Breslau, and Professor K. Girgensohn of Dorpat. These men do not, as yet, form a theological school or party. They may do so in course of time, since they agree in the main, and since they are attacked in common both by the strict conservatives and by the liberals. The very fact that a number of theologians simultaneously, but independently of each other, have presented, as the result of their mature thinking, lines of thought which in the main run parallel, may certainly be taken as indicative of a strong current of thought which has to be reckoned with.

The recent publications of these men have called forth quite a copious controversial literature. It is perfectly natural that any attempt to mediate between two extreme views will be open to criticism from both sides. The stanch conservatives complain that too much is yielded; the liberals com-

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plain that too much is retained. Without going into details I desire to state briefly some of the leading thoughts.¹

These theologians wish to be thoroughly modern; that is to say, in touch with the modern world. They desire to speak to the men of to-day in the language of to-day. They reckon with men whose minds are trained in modern methods of investigation—men whose intellectual equipment and whose world of thought are made up by contributions from Kant and Goethe, from Darwin and Hegel, from Wundt and Carlyle and Tolstoi, from Marx and Nietzsche and Ibsen. But they desire to be thoroughly positive as well; that is to say, to build upon an objective, fixed, immutable foundation. This to-day is peculiarly delicate and difficult, and the very problems with which this theology has to wrestle manifest the difficulty.

If you should ask me to mention these problems I might enumerate a great many of them; but it seems to me they all grow out of two or three which are at the root of modern thinking.

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EVOLUTION AND REVELATION.

The first is expressed by the two terms, evolution and revelation. By the term evolution I do not mean what is perhaps most prominent in the popular conception—namely, whether man descended from a monkey—but I understand the term in its philosophic meaning as an explanation of the whole universe viewed as a continuous and unbroken chain of effects produced by inherent forces. Are evolution and revelation absolute contradictions? Are they different words for the same thing? Is what some are accustomed to call revelation really evolution, or is what others call evolution really revelation? or are both great facts, and can they in some way be reconciled? All the questions touching the “*religions-geschichtliche*” view of Christianity, all the questions respecting the absoluteness of the Christian religion, the unique and authoritative position of Jesus Christ, hinge on the answer to this question. A great many controversies of the present day which create much uneasiness in the minds of good peo-

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ple are the outgrowth of this problem, even if they touch matters which to all appearances have no connection with it. Many of the theological battles which were fought in past centuries without permanent victory on either side are in fact, although the antagonists were not aware of it, based upon this very problem.

Is it possible to solve it? Modern-Positive theology says there must be a way to solve it, because there can be only one truth, even if we have not yet found a satisfactory explanation. And while I must confess that a really satisfying answer has not been given as yet, it is very gratifying to note that these men adhere very firmly to the fact of the manifestation of the living, personal God in nature and in history. They have thus far avoided the snares of pantheism, or materialism, or monism, or agnosticism, into which so many attempts at reconciliation have led.

SUBJECTIVISM AND OBJECTIVISM.

The second great problem is the relation of the subjective and objective elements in

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religion. This problem is another root from which a great many controversies of the present day spring forth; as, for instance, the question as to the final authority in religious matters, and the question touching the importance of the historical facts recorded in the Bible. The controversies concerning the authority of the Bible, the virgin birth of Christ, the atonement, the resurrection, and many other problems, can not be clearly understood unless the underlying problem as to the relation of the subjective to the objective side of Christianity be solved first.

I can not attempt, in the space of a brief lecture, to trace the various stages by which theology was led to this problem; suffice it to state that a tremendous change in the conception of the essence of religion was caused by the shifting of our whole mode of thinking from the metaphysical point of view to the experimental. This change is the result of a process of development which filled all of the last two hundred years. What is the outcome? Briefly stated, it may be said that religion is now viewed, not as a system

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of philosophy, not even so much as an historical growth, but rather as a phenomenon of present human experience.

Formerly the great facts determining the essence and nature of religion were sought without, now they are placed within man. Formerly theology dealt more with God and his attributes; with the world, its creation, government, and destiny; with the person and the work of Jesus Christ; with Church organization and ordinances—that is, with objects outside of man, and with facts of the past. Now it deals with experiences and states of mind and deeds of living men and women individually, and with their mutual relations socially. The determining factor has been changed from the objective to the subjective; and I consider this change the most important and far-reaching that has taken place since the beginnings of theology. The change is manifest, not only in theology, but it affects the whole mode of thinking; and present tendencies in theology as well as in philosophy, in sociology, in ethics, can not be under-

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stood without taking into consideration the inverted order of placing the emphasis.

THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY.

I said a minute ago that the two burning questions of present day theology—namely, the question as to the ultimate authority in religion, and the question touching the relative importance of the historic facts recorded in the Bible—have their roots in this problem. Formerly there was no question as to the source of authority. The ultimate authority was fixed, was absolute, was outside of man, was God. And God had made known His will authoritatively in the Bible. The only questions that could be raised, referred to the correct interpretation of the Bible. For centuries the Church claimed to be the sole interpreter. The Reformers of the sixteenth century rejected the interpretation of the Church, and placed in its stead the interpretation of the divinely enlightened conscience of the individual believer. This interpretation was summarized and expressed in the various confessions of

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faith. These great confessions became the authoritative interpretation of God's revelation. But the history of the Protestant sects up to the very present has demonstrated that, in all matters which lie outside the simple facts of man's religious experience, this interpretation was not only varying, but at times flatly contradictory. Moreover, if the enlightened conscience of the individual believer may interpret the Bible, it stands to reason that no man nor any body of men can assume the right to furnish a standard interpretation and make it binding upon the consciences of others.

This difficulty has been an embarrassment to Protestantism from its very beginning, and has been the source of bitter and shameful feuds among the various sects. For a long while openminded conservative theologians have felt the perplexity and delicacy of the situation, while liberal theologians, and likewise Romanists, claimed that the position of Protestantism was illogical and untenable. Now the weight of this change in our whole "Weltanschauung," and in our

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view touching the nature of religion in particular, is brought to bear upon this question with increasing force. If the determining factor of religion is to be found in my personal experiences and actions—that is, in my individual life—and if the personal experiences of a variety of men are, in the main, much more identical than their intellectual interpretations of the objective facts, why should there be any need of an outside authority to guide me in my personal religious life? The only authority possible, then, is the fact of personal experience.

By arguing in this wise, the ultimate source of authority in matters religious is changed from without to within. According to this new view, the religious experiences of the men and women whose history is recorded in the Bible are not authoritative, but may be, at best, helpful for the understanding of one's own experiences. The modern subjectivist considers the Bible the best commentary on the personal religious life.

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PRESENT EXPERIENCES AND PAST FACTS.

The other problem: If my present religious experience is the determining factor in my religion, how can it be in any way dependent on my belief in the historical truth of some facts that are recorded as having taken place hundreds, even thousands, of years ago. Is my present religious experience in any way connected with the actual occurrence or non-occurrence of some facts of the past? To illustrate. A friend of mine asked me recently, "If Judge Lindsey in Denver says to a street urchin, 'Now, kid, you will do your best; I just know you won't go back on me,' and the kid tries his best and makes a man of himself, where does the atoning death of Christ come in?" No one will doubt but that this is a reasonable, vital, and immensely practical question.

Liberal theology and Ritschlianism, as well, separate the subjective from the objective. The present religious experiences, it is claimed, have nothing to do whatever with what may have happened or may not

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have happened hundreds of years ago. Everything that is recorded in the Bible is open to investigation, and may be believed in as fact or considered as fiction. This is purely a matter of historical research. But whatever my conclusions may be as to these historical and literary questions and as to the scientific interpretation of the Biblical records, my present religious life is in no wise affected thereby. To illustrate: I may believe in the fact of a bodily resurrection of Christ, or may consider the accounts in the Gospels as legendary accretions, or as literary embodiments of lofty spiritual thought; this is a question of historical research; it does not touch my personal religious life. The question whether the death of Christ is viewed by Himself as of atoning merit, or whether this view is a speculative idea injected into Christianity by the dogmatician Paul, is for scholars to solve; my religious life does not depend on the conflicting opinions of scholars. A man, it is claimed, may be in personal vital fellowship with God; he may experience peace with God and receive strength from Him

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to overcome the temptations of life and to lead a holy Christlike life, and yet reject the recorded facts of the Deity of Christ, His supernatural birth, His atoning death, His resurrection and ascension.

By thus severing the connection between present religious experience and events of the past, Ritschlianism claimed to have reconciled religion and science or critical research. This solution of a very perplexing difficulty seemed at first plausible; it was greeted with joy and adopted by many. But the brief lifetime of a single generation was sufficient to demonstrate how unsatisfactory it was. In Germany Ritschlianism as a theological movement has spent its force. Some of the pupils of Ritschl have come nearer and nearer the conservative view, others have gone far beyond their master in negation, and the younger generation, drunk with the new wine of "Religionsgeschichte," looks upon Ritschl's views as antiquated. Strange to say, while in Germany Ritschlianism is a thing of the past, in America the thoughts of Ritschl seem to gain ground.

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Modern-Positive theology undertakes the task of emphasizing both subjective experience and objective fact. Says Professor Kropatscheck: "The aim of the theology of to-day is to examine more thoroughly the Christian experience of the believers; that is, to comprehend more definitely the spiritual realities in which God is operative. But these experiences are not the object of our faith. We do not believe in—that is, we do not rely upon—our experience; we believe in God. He is the only foundation, not our experience. Experience and revelation are corresponding realities. Revelation is a sum of spiritual truths which can be verified by experience as realities and energizing forces. If Revelation could not be verified by a present or a coming experience its contents would come to be a thing of the past. On the other side, experience would be an empty word, if the proof could not be adduced at any time, that back of the experience is the objective, unchanging revelation. We must try to verify the revelation contained in the Bible by personal experience."

This is not a new truth. The Pietists in

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Germany, Wesley and the Methodists in England and America, preached it and lived it. But they were so busy with the practical endeavor of saving souls by preaching this truth, that they found no time, nor were they inclined, to construct it into an elaborate system of theology. Two German professors, J. Chr. K. Hofmann and Fr. H. R. Frank, both of the University of Erlangen, made this principle the basal thought of their systems, but not until quite recently was its full import recognized generally.

CONSEQUENCES OF SUBJECTIVISM.

While formerly the objective facts were emphasized disproportionately, almost exclusively, the present tendency to lay all the stress upon the subjective experience, cutting it loose from the underlying objective facts has led to a number of consequences which modern-positive theology has to grapple with.

1. The first result is, that the unique and absolute position of Christianity is abandoned. Modern scholars detect no specific

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difference between the religious experiences of a Christian and those of a Mohammedan or Buddhist or Confucianist, or, in fact, the adherent of any religion. A sincere Buddhist may have just as blessed experiences as a sincere Christian; a pious Mohammedan may be just as happy, may find just as much comfort and strength, in his religious experience as his good Christian brother. Professor Deussen claims that Christianity, Buddhism, Brahmanism, Confucianism, and Mohammedanism supplement each other and ought to learn from each other.

2. If religious experience has nothing to do with the past, it is obvious that the preaching of the facts recorded in the Bible is not absolutely necessary to produce this experience. Any means which will cause the experience is legitimate, and ought to be used. Now, modern life is greatly, if not principally, influenced by what might be termed *impressionalism*. Modern art is impressionalistic. The music of Wagner is different from that of Beethoven; the paintings of Arnold Böcklin are different from those of Correggio; Gerhardt Hauptmann

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or Ibsen writes differently from Dante or Goethe. Where is the difference? Modern art in all its representations aims not so much to create lofty ideas, but rather to effect nervous sensations. Not clearness of thought, but misty, emotional excitement, is the aim. This explains why modern art, music as well as drama and painting, cultivates so extensively the symbolic and mystic and romantic elements. Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, compel us to think in order to do; they make us see a great moral law in its bearing upon human life. Böcklin, Sudermann, and Ibsen want us to feel or experience some emotion. They deal with subjective conditions, not with objective facts. The true artist, whether he belongs to the old school or to the new, certainly aims also to influence the will, to produce moral volitions; but while the old school used as an avenue of approach the intellect by presenting in the most artistic and perfect form some objective fact, the new school travels the road of the emotional sensibilities. It stands to reason that, if religion consists principally in experiences,

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these experiences may be produced by the same means which modern art employs, and, as a matter of fact, the whole apparatus of impressionism used to-day in the studio of the artist and on the stage finds its way into theology and preaching and practical Church methods.

But impressions are somewhat like intoxicants. More and stronger doses are needed to produce results. When the Church has reached the limit in producing impressions, the people run after other prophets who promise to furnish what they long for. They try Dowie, Christian Science, Gift of Tongues, Spiritism, Theosophy, and other fads, and a great many end by reeling into infidelity.

3. We come now to the third and last result which I shall mention. If the stress is laid exclusively on the experimental side, then the proper expert in religious matters is not the theologian, but the psychologist and the physician. Formerly theology was a part of philosophy. The student of theology was required to spend most of his time in studying philosophy. Then theology was

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made a historical science, a branch of history. The student of theology had to study ancient languages and history. Now theology is becoming a part of experimental psychology and pathology, both in its narrower individualistic and in its wider social sphere. The student of theology must, above everything else, study human nature, individually and socially. Thus the theological seminaries are asked to discard the study of Hebrew and Greek and to introduce psychology and sociology.

I do not object to the addition of these branches to the curriculum. The theological student of to-day ought to study a great many subjects; the more the better. But the question arises, Which of the many lines of study is of paramount importance? What is the preacher to be? Is he to be an interpreter of past facts in which God manifested His will and by which He set a standard for all times; or is he to be an agent to produce certain emotional and ethical results by whatever means these results may best be effected, irrespective of anything that may have taken place in the past?

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Formerly the philosophers busied themselves with the Christian religion; next the historians; now it is the psychologists and physicians, especially the specialists on nervous and mental disorders. Just before leaving home this summer I received the prospectus of a new magazine to be published in Germany, devoted exclusively to the study of religious phenomena from the psychological point of view. In the list of contributors I noticed some theologians, some psychologists, but more physicians, and, in particular, eminent specialists in the field of pathology.

THE FIELD OF EXPERIENCE THE COMING BATTLE-GROUND.

The coming battle-ground in theology will not be the field of speculative philosophy. It is too late in the day to act as if Kant and Hegel and Schelling had never lived. It will not be the field of criticism,—neither literary nor historical criticism. Christianity as a present force can not be denied even by denying the historicity of the persons who were its forerunners, founders,

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and first missionaries. The battle-ground will be the field of experimental psychology. Mere natural, psychic impressions and emotions can be explained by mere natural, psychic causes. And mere natural causes—as the power of oratory, music, symbolism, personal magnetism—can produce none but results which are explicable. The question which confronts us is: Is there in Christian experience something that is beyond the explanation of purely natural laws, something really divine, something produced directly by the Spirit of God? I do not mean to say that whatever is explicable has thus ceased to be divine, nor do I wish to create the impression that the divine is magical, disorderly, capricious. But I do mean to say that in Christian experience there must be something that can be traced back directly to a manifestation of the living God in the soul of man; not some effervescent impression, but something which gives to man lasting power over evil, power over environment, power over misfortune, power over sin, power over death; something which enables him to do that which is considered im-

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possible. Nothing short of this can be called Christian experience.

THE NEED OF AN OBJECTIVE FOUNDATION.

But if the experience is not to be lost in subjectivism, in vague mysticism, in morbid impressionism, in changing moods, in fruitless and weakening emotions; if it is to be a fellowship with the eternal God that endures in eternity, it must have an objective basis, some foundation outside of ourselves. Every great system of theology has felt this need, and tried to meet it. Catholicism and Anglicanism build upon the sacerdotal conception of the Church; Lutheranism builds upon the sacrament of baptism; all Calvinistic Churches have as a foundation the doctrine of the eternal decrees; all Baptist Churches have back of the personal experience the mode of baptism. They all have something to fall back upon, and upon these objective foundations the religious life of many thousands is still reared. They remain firm, even if personal experience changes.

Modern-Positive theology does not build

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upon any of these foundations. They may appear firm, but they are artificial. They can be undermined by historical criticism and scientific research. The most important task of the new theological school is to find a foundation which is firm and lasting and broad and deep. This foundation has been clearly pointed out by St. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians: "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. iii.). To show the vital relation of the Christ—not of the man Jesus, but of Christ the Son of God—to the experience of the believer, is the work which Modern-Positive theology has undertaken to do.

In closing, allow me to state that, to my mind, no other Church needs this kind of a theology more than Methodism. The Methodists do not recognize any of the foundations upon which other Churches built their theological systems. We do not link our Christian experience to sacerdotalism nor sacramentarianism, nor eternal decrees, nor modes of baptism; we build upon the direct work of the living God in the human soul

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and do not allow any Church, or priest, or sacrament, or decree, or rite, to stand between God and the soul. This has ever been the glory of Methodism. It is also her danger. It is subjective. It is safe against temptations and doubts caused by the attacks of criticism—whether it be philosophical or historical, psychological or medical—only when based upon the impregnable rock of the person and work of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Scriptures, and as manifested in the holy lives of His followers through all the ages.

Methodist theology has nothing to fear. In its central idea it has antedated the new “Modern-Positive” theology of Germany by more than a century. There was no time in its history when it was not modern; that is to say, it was always permeated with the spirit of adaptability to new modes of thinking, and was open to new discoveries in the great storehouse of God’s truth. It must remain alert and elastic and modern. Whether the Church undertakes the thankless work of restating her creed or not, every Methodist preacher and teacher must have

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a workable theology which enables him to speak to the men of to-day in their own language. But Methodist theology must hold fast to the unchangeable fact of the revelation and manifestations of the living, personal God in the life and work of Him "who dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father" (John i, 14), of Him "who humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross, but whom also God highly exalted and gave unto Him the name, which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii, 8-10).

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LECTURE I.

1. Recent books on the authority of the Bible as affected by modern critical research.—*Martin Kähler*: *Dogmatische Zeitfragen*. Erster Band: *Zur Bibelfrage*. Leipzig. 1907.—*Friedrich Sieffert*: *Offenbarung und Heilige Schrift*. Langensalza. 1905.—*F. Niebergall*: *Wast ist uns heute die Bibel?* Tübingen. 1907.—*D. Haussleiter*: *Die Autorität der Bibel*. München. 1905.—*Wilhelm Lotz*: *Das Alte Testament und die Wissenschaft*. Leipzig. 1905.—*Justus Köberle*: *Zum Kampfe um das Alte Testament*. Wismar. 1906.

2. *Biblische Zeit- und Streitfragen zur Aufklärung der Gebildeten*. Herausgegeben von *Professor Dr. Kropatscheck*. Berlin. Edwin Runge. This series of pamphlets represents the conservative wing. Among the notable contributors are Professors B. Weiss, Seeberg, Köberle, König, Lemme, Kähler, Oettli, Grützmacher, von Orelli, Lotz, Ewald, etc. The Methodist Book Concern announces an English translation of some of the *Zeitfragen* under the title, "Foreign Religious Series," edited by R. J. Cooke, D. D.

Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher, herausgegeben von *Fr. Michael Schiele*. Tübingen. J. C. B. Mohr. This series voices the views of the

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liberals. Among its contributors are men like Professors Bousset, Wernle, Wrede, Weinle, Holtzmann, Schmiedel, Gunkel, Guthe, Pfeiderer, etc.

These two popular series give, perhaps, the best idea of the present problems and their solutions offered by German theology. A number is issued every month.

Reviews of theological literature furnish from the liberal point of view the bi-weekly *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, edited by Professors Harnack and Schürer, and the monthly *Theologische Rundschau*, edited by Professors Bousset and Heitmüller. The conservatives are represented by the *Theologisches Literaturblatt*, edited by Dr. Hölscher; *Theologischer Literaturbericht*, edited by Pastor Jordan; and *Die Theologie der Gegenwart*, a new enterprise started a few months ago by Prof. Grützmacher.

Of popular weeklies might be mentioned, *Der Alte Glaube* and *Die evangelisch-lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, representing the staunch Lutheran conservatism; *Die Reformation*, very ably edited by Pastor Bunke, of Berlin, by far the best of the several conservative papers; and *Die Christliche Welt*, the able exponent of Ritschlianism, edited by Prof. Rade, of Marburg.

More learned are the conservative *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift* (monthly, Leipzig, A. Deichert), and the liberal *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* (bimonthly, Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr).

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3. The two latest commentaries on the Old Testament are based on this view. The *Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament*. In Verbindung mit J. Benzinger, A. Bertholet, K. Budde, B. Duhm, H. Holzinger, G. Wildeboer; herausgegeben von *Karl Marti*. Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 5 volumes; and *Handkommentar zum Alten Testament*. Herausgegeben von *W. Nowack*. Göttingen. Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht. Among the contributors are Profs. Gunkel, Steuernagel, Baentsch, Budde, Baethgen, Giesebrecht, Löhr, Siegfried. Other recent books representing the same point of view are: *J. Wellhausen*: Die israelitisch-jüdische Religion in "Die Kultur der Gegenwart". Leipzig. 1906.—*K. Marti*: Die Religion des Alten Testaments unter den Religionen des vorderen Orients. Tübingen. 1906.—*K. Budde*: Geschichte der althebräischen Literatur. Leipzig. 1906.

4. *W. Möller*: Historisch-kritische Bedenken gegen die Graf-Wellhausensche Hypothese. Gütersloh. 1899.—English translation: Are the Critics Right? London. Religious Tract Society. 1903.—*W. Möller*: Die Messianische Erwartung der vorexilischen Propheten. Gütersloh. 1906.—*J. Dahse*: Textkritische Bedenken gegen den Ausgangspunkt der heutigen Penta-teuchkritik. In *Arch. Rel.* VI, 1903.—*B. Baentsch*: Altorientalischer und israelitischer Monotheismus. Tübingen. 1906.

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5. The most convenient book for an understanding of the position of Pan-Babylonism is the third edition of Eberhard Schrader's *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, neu bearbeitet von *H. Zimmern* und *H. Winckler*. Berlin. 1903.—The title of *Dr. Alfred Jeremias'* book is: *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients*. 2. Auflage. Leipzig. 1907.

Omitting the literature of the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets, the Code of Hamurabi and the Babel-Bible controversy, mention might be made of: *Im Kampfe um den Alten Orient*. Wehr- und Streitschriften, herausgegeben von *Alfred Jeremias* und *Hugo Winckler*. Leipzig. 1907.—*H. Winckler*: *Die babylonische Kultur in ihren Beziehungen zur unsrigen*. Leipzig. 1902.—*H. Winckler*: *Ex Oriente Lux*. Leipzig. 1906. (A series of pamphlets dealing with problems of Oriental Archæology.) — *H. Winckler*: *Altorientalische Forschungen*. Leipzig. 1906.—*C. F. Lehmann*: *Babyloniens Kulturmission einst und jetzt*. Leipzig. 1903.—*H. Gunkel*: *Israel und Babylonien. Der Einfluss Babyloniens auf die israelitische Religion*. Göttingen. 1903.

6. Of recent works of conservative scholars mention might be made of: *Kurzgefasster Kommentar zu den Heiligen Schriften Alten und Neuen Testaments*, herausgegeben von *H. Strack* und *O. Zöckler*. München. C. H. Beck. Among the

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contributors are Professors Oettli, von Orelli, Klostermann, Volck, Kessler.—*H. L. Strack*: Einleitung in das Alte Testament. 6. Auflage. München. 1906.—*A. Klostermann*: Der Pentateuch. Beiträge zu seinem Verständnis und seiner Entstehungsgeschichte. Neue Folge. Leipzig. 1907.—*J. Köberle*: Sünde und Gnade im religiösen Leben des Volkes Israel. München. 1905.—*F. Bennewitz*: Die Sünde im alten Israel. Leipzig. 1907.—*Ed. König*: Prophetenideal, Judentum und Christentum. Leipzig. 1906.—*E. Sellin*: Beiträge zur israelitischen und jüdischen Religionsgeschichte. Leipzig. 1905.—*S. Oettli*: Geschichte Israels bis auf Alexander den Grossen. Calw. 1905.

7. *A. Harnack*: Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius. Leipzig. 1897.—*A. Harnack*: Lukas der Arzt. Leipzig. 1906.—The most elaborate and valuable work which recent conservative scholarship has produced in New Testament Introduction is *Theodor Zahn*: Einleitung in das Neue Testament. 3. Auflage. Leipzig. 1905.—The most important New Testament Commentary is the *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*. Herausgegeben von *Theodor Zahn*. Leipzig. The contributors are Profs. Bachmann, Ewald, Horn, Riggenbach, Seeberg, Wohlenberg. Seven volumes have appeared. The volumes by Prof. Zahn on Matthew and Galatians have passed through two editions in a short time.

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LECTURE II.

1. *O. Pfeiderer*: Christentum und Religion. 3 volumes. München. 1906-07.—*H. Zimmern*: Keilinschriften und Bibel. Berlin. 1903. Cf. also Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament.—*A. Janssen*: Das Gilgamesch-Epos in der Weltliteratur. Strassburg. 1907.

2. *A. Schweitzer*: Von Reimarus zu Wrede. Tübingen. 1906.—*R. H. Grützmacher*: Ist das liberale Jesusbild modern? (In the series: Biblische Zeit- und Streitfragen.) Berlin. 1907.

3. *A. Harnack*: Das Wesen des Christentums. Leipzig. 1900. And later,—English translation: What is Christianity? New York. J. P. Putnam.—*Bousset*: Jesus. 3. Auflage. Tübingen. 1907. (In Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher.)—*Bousset*: Was wissen wir von Jesus? Tübingen. 1905.—*H. Weinl*: Jesus im 19. Jahrhundert. Tübingen. 1907.—*H. Weinl*: Paulus. Tübingen. 1904.—*W. Wrede*: Paulus. Tübingen. 1907.—*W. Wrede*: Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien. Göttingen. 1901.—*P. Wernle*: Die Quellen des Lebens Jesu. Tübingen. 1906.—*A. Jülicher*: Die Religion Jesu. Leipzig. 1904. (In "Kultur der Gegenwart.")—*A. Jülicher*: Neue Linien in der Kritik der evangelischen Ueberlieferung. Giessen. 1906.

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4. *G. Frenssen*: Hilligenlei. Berlin. 1906.—*Ed. von Hartmann*: Das Christentum des Neuen Testamentes. Berlin. 1905.—*A. Drews*: Die Religion als Selbstbewusstsein Gottes. Jena. 1906.—*W. von Schnehen*: Der moderne Jesuskultus. Leipzig. 1906.—*C. A. Bernoulli*: Christus in Hilligenlei. Jena. 1906.—*K. Kalthoff*: Das Christusproblem. Jena. 1903.—*K. Kalthoff*: Die Entstehung des Christentums. Leipzig. 1904.—*E. Rasmussen*: Jesus, eine vergleichende psychopathologische Studie. 1905.—*Dr. de Loosten*: Jesus Christus vom Standpunkte des Psychiaters. 1905.

LECTURE III.

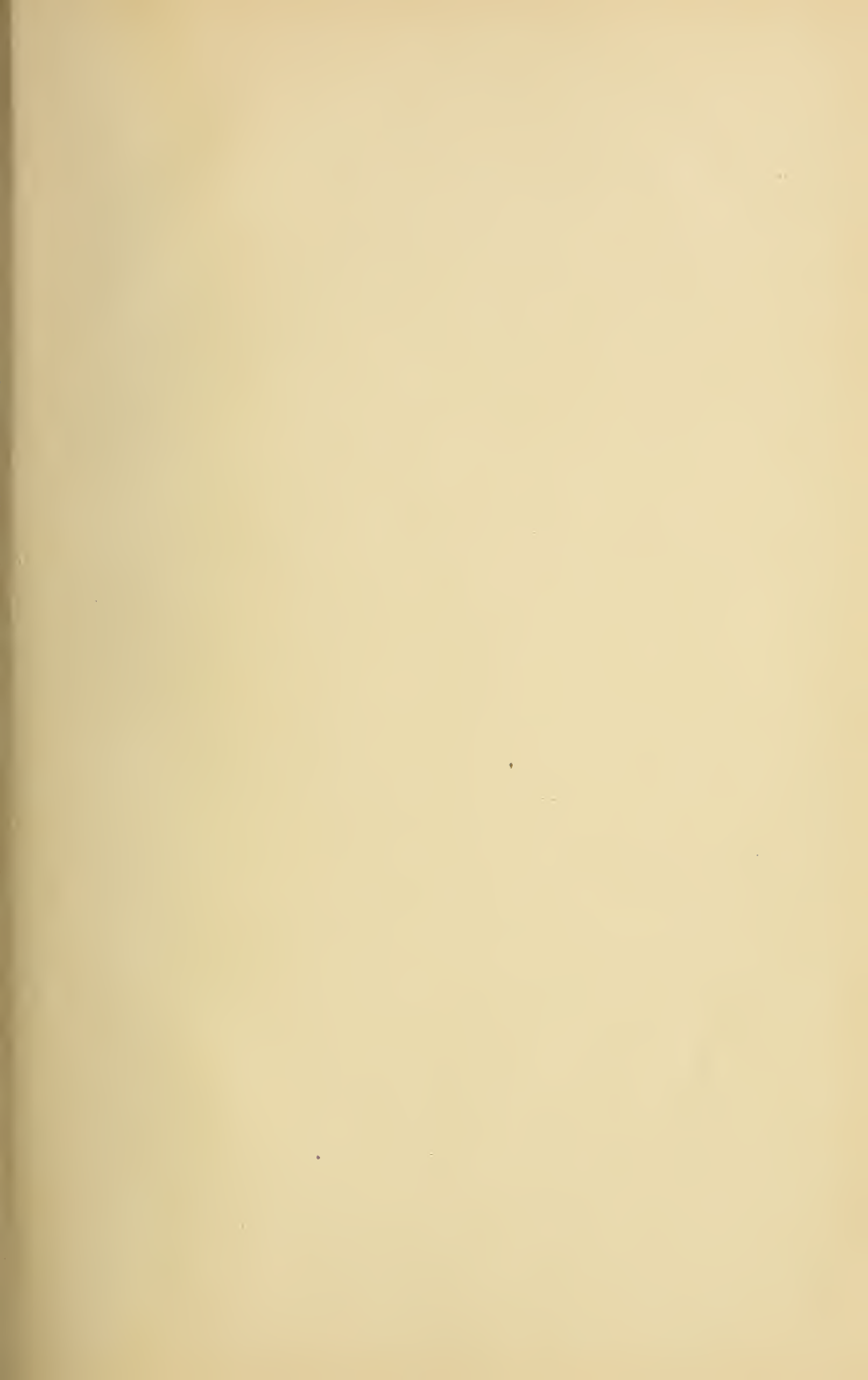
1. *R. Seeberg*: Die Kirche Deutschlands im neunzehnten Jahrhundert. 4. Auflage. Leipzig. 1903.—*R. Seeberg*: Die Grundwahrheiten der christlichen Religion. 4. Auflage. Leipzig. 1906.—*R. Seeberg*: Aus Religion und Geschichte. Gesammelte Aufsätze und Vorträge. Leipzig. 1906.—*Theodor Kaftan*: Moderne Theologie des Alten Glaubens. 2. Auflage. Berlin. 1906.—*R. Grützmacher*: Die Forderung einer modernen positiven Theologie. Leipzig. 1905.—*R. Grützmacher*: Modern-positive Vorträge. Leipzig. 1906.—*Karl Beth*: Die Moderne und die Prinzipien der Theologie. Berlin. 1907.

Reviews of these books and articles bearing on the "Modern-Positive" theology can be found in

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all the theological magazines. Of pamphlets we mention: *W. Schmidt*: *Moderne Theologie des alten Glaubens in kritischer Beleuchtung*. Gütersloh. 1906.—*W. Schmidt*: *Die Forderung einer modernen positiven Theologie in kritischer Beleuchtung*. Gütersloh. 1906.—*Pastor Dunkmann*: *Moderne Theologie des alten Glaubens*. Gütersloh. 1906.—*E. Schaeder*: *Die Christologie der Bekenntnisse und die moderne Theologie*. Gütersloh. 1905.—*Martin Schian*: *Zur Beurteilung der modernen positiven Theologie*. Giessen, 1907.

Very helpful are: *Fr. Kropatscheck*: *Die Aufgaben der Christusgläubigen Theologie in der Gegenwart*. Berlin. 1905.—*Karl Girgensohn*: *Zwölf Reden über die christliche Religion*. München. 1906.



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